PINNOCK'S CATECHISMS.

# PART I. 33

OF THE

# History of America;

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT

OF ITS

## *DISCOVERY BY COLUMBUS,*

AND SUBSEQUENT

## CONQUEST OF MEXICO AND PERU;

WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE

*Manners & Customs of the Original Inhabitants.*

LONDON:
*Printed by Davidson, Old Boswell Court; for*
PINNOCK AND MAUNDER, MENTORIAN PRESS,
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# PINNOCK'S CATECHISMS
## *OF THE ARTS and SCIENCES.*

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Mr. WETHERELL having applied to the LORD CHANCELLOR to grant an INJUNCTION to restrain certain Booksellers from printing, publishing, and selling, *Pirated editions of PINNOCK'S CATECHISMS*, the originals of which he denominated "useful Compendiums of Instruction for the Juvenile Classes of Society;" his LORDSHIP, on comparing the Spurious Copies with the Genuine Works, granted the Injunction; and after having attentively examined the latter, was pleased to make the following important observation on them:—"*It appears to me that* ADULTS *might be greatly benefited by the instruction these Books contain*, AS WELL AS THE YOUNGER BRANCHES OF SOCIETY."

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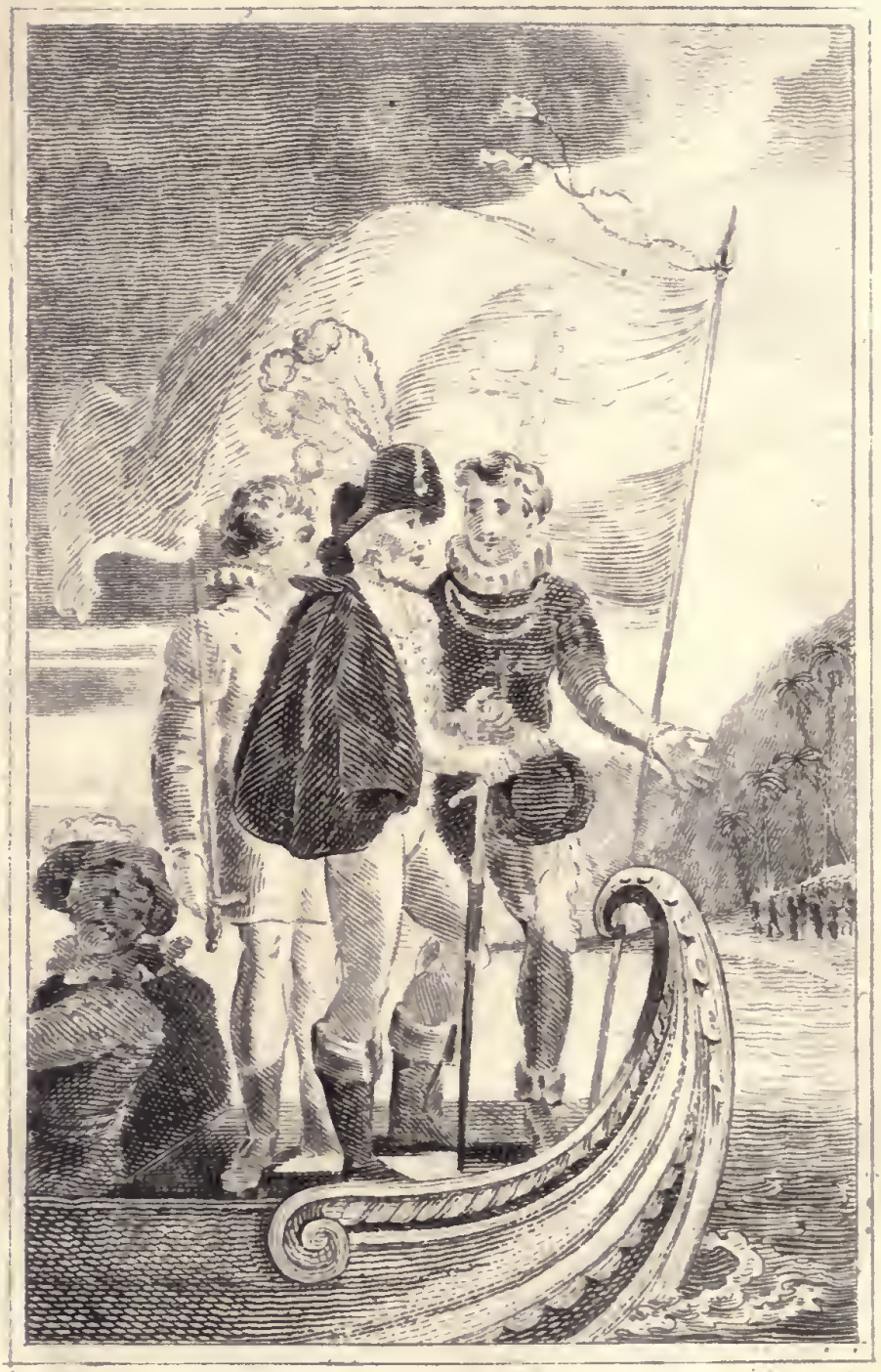

*Columbus landing in America.*

A

# CATECHISM

OF THE

# HISTORY OF AMERICA:

IN TWO PARTS.

## *PART I.*

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OF ITS

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# PREFACE.

*IN producing the History of America, on a plan similar to our other Historical Catechisms, which have met with such universal support from those engaged in the arduous and honourable task of Education, we have only to hope that the attempt to render a knowledge of the important and interesting facts connected with it, may meet with public approbation. Though we are on all occasions most anxious to publish our elementary Works at the lowest price possible, the nature of the present subject would not allow us to compress it within the usual compass of seventy-two pages: we have therefore divided the History of America into two parts; the first, including an account of its Discovery, the progress of the Spanish arms and colonies there, and a general view of the manners and customs of the natives, with some account of its natural productions and curiosities. The second part includes the History of the British Expeditions to America, its subsequent colonization, with the rise and progress of the present powerful Republic of the United States.*

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# *CATECHISM*

OF THE

# HISTORY OF AMERICA.

## CHAPTER I.

### *The Life of Columbus, as connected with the Discovery of America.*

*Question.* PREVIOUS to your entering on the History of America, will it not be expedient to relate the causes which led to its discovery?

*Answer.* Yes; in doing which I must necessarily introduce a short sketch of the life of that intrepid navigator, who encountered unknown seas, and contended with innumerable difficulties in discovering what was emphatically called *a New World.*

Q. What was his name and country?

A. His name was Columbus, a native of Genoa, descended from an honourable family, though from various misfortunes almost reduced to indigence.

Q. What was the occupation of his youth?

A. He early distinguished himself by his attachment to a sea-faring life, and his parents rather encouraged than thwarted his inclination

by having him instructed in the art of navigation, and such other sciences as are connected with it.

Q. When did he enter on a maritime life, and what voyages did he first undertake?

A. He went to sea at the early age of fourteen; his first voyages were confined to those ports in the Mediterranean which his countrymen, the Genoese, frequented; but this was too confined a sphere for his active mind, and we soon find him making a voyage to the northern seas, and advancing several degrees within the polar circle*.

Q. In what service was Columbus next engaged?

A. He entered into the service of a famous sea-captain of his own name and family, and went on a cruise against the Mahometans and Venetians, in which he was soon distinguished for his intrepid courage, presence of mind, and naval skill.

Q. Relate a remarkable incident that occurred on one occasion.

A. Having met with some Venetian vessels richly laden, a desperate engagement ensued, and the ship in which Columbus served took fire, together with one of the enemy's to which it was

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* The idea of approaching the Pole has been entertained at different periods, and many attempts to effect it have been made, all of which have hitherto proved unsuccessful. The immense mountains of ice, which float in the arctic seas, have proved an insuperable barrier to every expedition that has yet been undertaken: but the passion for discovery is so inherent in the mind of man, that notwithstanding former obstacles, an expedition for the express object of approaching the North Pole left the British shores last year, but returned without accomplishing its destination.

fast grappled. In this dreadful extremity he threw himself into the sea, laid hold of a floating oar, and by its assistance and his dexterity in swimming, he reached the shore, though it was above two leagues distant.

Q. What circumstance brought Columbus into notice, and paved the way to his future fame?

A. Columbus had lately entered into the service of the Portugese, who at that time were engaged in endeavouring to find a new route to the East Indies, by which they hoped to gain immense commercial advantages. This suited the enterprising genius of our hero, and it was not long before the Portuguese conceived such a favourable opinion of his merit and talents that they warmly solicited him to remain in their kingdom.

Q. Did he not form a matrimonial alliance there?

A. Yes; he married the daughter of Bartholomew Perestrello, a celebrated captain employed by prince Henry of Portugal in his early navigations. By this marriage, Columbus got possession of the journals and charts of this experienced navigator, which considerably increased his stock of nautical knowledge, and encouraged him to pursue his favourite passion with increased ardour, soon becoming one of the greatest navigators in Europe.

Q. By what route did Columbus propose to reach the Indies, and to whom did he offer his services?

A. Columbus conceived the project of discovering new countries, which probably formed part of the great Indian continent, by sailing westward across the Atlantic Ocean; he communicated his

plan to the Genoese, who thinking it chimerical and absurd, rejected his proposal, and for ever lost the opportunity of restoring their commonwealth to its ancient splendour.

Q. To whom did he next apply?

A. He made his next overture to the king of Portugal, as having the second claim to his services, and the king referred it to the decision of his most eminent cosmographers.*

Q. What followed?

A. These men having before advised the king to search for a passage to India by a route exactly the reverse of that proposed by Columbus, were jealous of his fame, and endeavoured to betray him into such a particular explanation of his system as should enable them to reap the honours and rewards to be expected from such a discovery.

Q. Did they effect this?

A. Not to the extent they hoped for; but they obtained sufficient information to be enabled to dispatch a vessel in order to attempt the discovery by the exact route Columbus had proposed.

Q. How did it succeed?

A. The pilot they engaged to execute his plan, not having the genius or fortitude of its author, was soon discouraged, and returned to Lisbon, condemning the project as equally dangerous and extravagant.

Q. In what way did Columbus act on discovering this treachery?

A. He immediately quitted Portugal, and landed in Spain in the year 1484, resolving to propose

* Those who understand the science of *cosmography*, or the art of writing a general description of the universe.

his scheme in person to Ferdinand and Isabella, who at that time governed the united kingdoms of Castile and Arragon.

Q. What success did he meet with?

A. After encountering every species of disappointment during an attendance of eight years, queen Isabella was at length induced to equip a fleet of three small ships for the prosecution of this bold and adventurous design.

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## CHAP. II.

### *The Life of Columbus, (continued.)*

Q. WHEN did Columbus leave Spain, and what place did he first arrive at?

A. He set sail on the 3d of August, 1492, and arrived at the Canary Islands on the 13th. Here he took in provisions; but so unfit were the ships for the purposes of their expedition, that Columbus was obliged to refit them to the best of his power.

Q. What circumstances occurred on the voyage to alarm those under his command?

A. The sailors being only accustomed to short voyages, were alarmed at the distance they were from land; and they also observed that the magnetic needle did not point exactly to the polar star, but varied towards the west. The latter circumstance filled his companions with terror: they considered that they were in a boundless ocean where the laws of nature were altered, and the only guide they had left being about to fail them.

Q. What resulted from it?

A. The sailors broke out into open mutiny, and resolved to throw their commander overboard if he did not immediately return home; but Columbus succeeded in quelling them, and perceiving several signs which he thought indicated his near approach to land, he promised to abandon the enterprize and return to Spain, if land were not discovered in three days.

Q. Did they discover land?

A. Yes; on the 12th of October, an island was clearly discovered about two leagues to the north, whose verdant fields presented the aspect of a delightful country.

Q. How did his seamen now conduct themselves?

A. They implored their commander to pardon their ignorance and insolence, which had given him so much uneasiness, and now almost worshipped him as a person inspired by Heaven with more than human sagacity and fortitude.

Q. Were not preparations immediately made to land?

A. Yes; the Europeans manned and armed their boats, and rowed towards the island with their colours flying, music playing, and other martial pomp. They saw the coast covered with an immense multitude of people attracted thither by curiosity, and expressing their surprise by their looks and gestures.

Q. Describe the ceremony which took place on landing.

A. Columbus, arrayed in a rich dress, and with a naked sword in his hand, was the first who

landed; his men followed, and having kneeled down and kissed the ground, erected a crucifix, and prostrating themselves before it, returned thanks to God for conducting their voyage to such an happy issue.

Q. What impression did the appearance of the Spaniards make upon the natives?

A. They gazed upon them in silent admiration and awe, and when they viewed their ships moving, as they thought, with wings, upon the water, and uttering a dreadful sound resembling thunder, accompanied with lightning and smoke, they considered their guests to be a superior order of beings, who had descended from heaven to visit them.

Q. What appearance did the natives present?

A. They appeared in the simple innocence of nature, entirely naked. Their complexion was of a dusky copper colour, their faces and several parts of their bodies were fantastically painted; they had no beards, and their long black hair hung upon their shoulders, or was bound in tresses round their heads.

Q. What name did Columbus give to this island?

A. Columbus called it *San Salvador;* but found, to his sorrow, from the poverty of the inhabitants, that these could not be the Indies he was in quest of; he, therefore, steered southward and discovered other islands, one of which he called Hispaniola, or St. Domingo.

Q. Did this appear more likely to gratify his wishes?

A. Yes; this island abounded with all the

necessaries of life, and was inhabited by a humane and hospitable people; and what was of still greater consequence, it ensured his favourable reception at home, as from the samples he received, it promised to afford considerable quantities of gold.

Q. Did not Columbus now return to Spain?

A. Yes: having left a few of his companions on the island, as the ground-work of a colony, he hastened home to acquaint his countrymen of the successful issue of the expedition, and also to persuade the king of Spain to fit out another fleet better equipped for such a voyage.

Q. When did he arrive in Spain?

A. He arrived at Palos on the 15th of March, 1493, being seven months and eleven days from the time he left that port.

Q. How was he received?

A. Every flattering token of joy was shewn to him on his arrival. Ferdinand and Isabella, no less astonished than delighted, desired Columbus to repair to court, that they might have the pleasure of hearing from his own lips a full account of his extraordinary services and discoveries.

Q. Was not another fleet fitted out for Columbus?

A. Yes; a fleet of seventeen ships was equipped, on board of which were fifteen hundred persons, many of whom were of noble families. They were furnished with every thing requisite for conquest or settlement, with all kinds of animals, plants, seeds, &c. most likely to thrive in the climate of the West Indies.

Q. Why did the Spaniards call these islands the West Indies.

A. It was owing to the mistaken notion that then prevailed, that the newly discovered countries formed part of the vast continent of India. The name having been thus adopted and continued for some time before it was known to be erroneous, the general term *West Indies* has ever since been applied to them.

Q. What was the result of his second voyage?

A. He established a colony and built fortresses in Hispaniola, with the view of securing the dependence of the natives. He also visited the islands of Cuba and Jamaica, and discovered many others of less note.

Q. Did not his successes create the envy of his enemies?

A. Yes; every report that could be spread to his disadvantage was industriously circulated in Spain; at length an officer was dispatched from thence to act the part of a spy on his conduct, and Columbus found it necessary to return to Spain once more to refute the calumnies of those who had basely endeavoured to traduce him.

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## CHAP. III.

### *The Life of Columbus (continued.)*

Q. WAS Columbus permitted to make a third voyage?

A. Yes; he cleared himself from the various accusations that were brought against him, and again set sail, but not till after two years had elapsed.

Q. What course did he now intend to take?

A. He designed to keep to the southward of the Canary Islands, until he came under the equinoctial line, and then to proceed directly westward, that he might discover what opening that might afford to India, or what new discoveries might reward his perseverance.

Q. What was the success of this third expedition?

A. He suffered the greatest inconvenience from the excessive heats and rains between the tropics, and was for a long time enveloped in a thick fog, but at length discovered land, which proved to be an island now called Trinidad, on the coast of Guiana.

Q. What extraordinary appearance did he soon afterwards witness?

A. A violent tumult in the waves, occasioned by the tide of the sea being met by the rapid current of an immense river.

Q. What is the river called?

A. It is called the Oronoco, and is remarkable for its singular winding course, being estimated, reckoning all its windings, at 1380 miles in length.*

Q. What conclusions did Columbus draw from having discovered the river Oronoco?

A. He justly concluded that no island could supply so vast a river, and therefore that he had

* The Oronoco is also remarkable for rising and falling once a-year only; rising gradually during the space of five months, continuing stationary one month, and then falling for five months, and again continuing stationary for one month.

at last reached the continent; and as he found that the land continued for a great way to the westward, he was convinced that his conclusion was correct.

Q. Did he attempt to make any settlement there?

A. No; he merely landed at several places, and traded in a friendly manner with the inhabitants, receiving from them gold and pearls for European toys and trinkets; but the distresses of his crew were very great from the perils and length of the voyage, and he yielded to their wishes, and returned to Hispaniola.

Q. In what state did he find the colony there?

A. He found the colony by no means in a flourishing condition. The Indians, who were compelled to furnish the Spaniards with a certain quantity of gold regularly, had endeavoured to throw off the yoke, and, during his absence, an alarming mutiny had broken out among the Spaniards.

Q. Did he restore tranquillity?

A. Yes; the mutineers at length yielded to the authority of Columbus, but several, whom he allowed to return to Spain, raised such an outcry against his administration, that a nobleman, named Francis Bovadilla, was sent to Hispaniola, with full powers to inquire into his conduct.

Q. Did not other nations endeavour to emulate the Spaniards?

A. Yes; the spirit of discovery at this time spread itself widely, and many adventurers were anxious to acquire the reputation of Columbus.

Q. What discoveries were made, and by whom?

A. The Portuguese discovered Brazil, which

constitutes the most valuable part of their possessions, and is at this time the seat of their government. Cabot, a native of Bristol, discovered the north-east coasts, which afterwards composed the British Empire in North America, and many other private adventurers discovered different portions of the new continent.

Q. Did not Amerigo Vespucci, a gentleman of Florence, accompany a Spanish officer, named Alonzo de Ojeda, on a voyage of discovery?

Q. Yes; and on his return published an account of his adventures, which contained an amusing history of his voyage, and judicious observations on the manners of the people and the productions of the country he had visited.

Q. What resulted from it?

A. It being the first description of any part of the New World that had been published, it was rapidly circulated, and Amerigo having artfully magnified his own actions, the public unjustly conferred his name on the country which he was *supposed* to have discovered; and hence the name of AMERICA was given to this quarter of the globe.

Q. Did not Columbus suffer a still greater mortification?

A. Yes; for although being deprived of the honor of giving his name to a country which owed its discovery to his active genius, must have been keenly felt by him, he now had to suffer an indignity far more humiliating.

Q. What was it?

A. Bovadilla, the person who had been sent out to inquire into his conduct, being his most im-

placable enemy, gladly listened to every report that malice could invent, and presuming on the authority of his office, had Columbus arrested, loaded with chains, hurried on board a ship, and sent to Spain as a traitor.

Q. What was the conduct of the captain who commanded the ship on board of which Columbus was confined?

A. As soon as he was clear off the land, Alonzo de Valeja, the captain, still retaining a proper sense of the great actions of Columbus, approached him with great respect, and offered to release him from the fetters with which he was unjustly loaded.

Q. What reply did Columbus make to this offer?

A. "No," said he, "I wear these irons in consequence of an order from my sovereigns. They shall find me as obedient to this as to their other injunctions. By their command I have been confined, and their command alone shall set me at liberty."

Q. In what way was Columbus treated on arriving in Spain?

A. Ashamed of their conduct, the Spanish sovereigns instantly issued orders to set him at liberty, and remitted money to enable him to appear at court in a manner suitable to his rank. They degraded Bovadilla, and denied having authorised him to resort to such violent proceedings, but had not the generosity to restore Columbus to his former situation.

Q. How did he bear the injuries he had sustained?

A. He felt indignant at the ungenerous treatment he had received, and did not attempt to conceal the sentiments which it excited. Whereever he went he carried about with him those fetters with which he had been loaded; and gave orders that when he died they should be buried in his grave.

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## CHAP. IV.

### *The Life of Columbus (concluded).*

Q. Did Columbus make another voyage of discovery?

A. Yes; he conceived an opinion that beyond the continent of America there was a sea which extended to the East Indies, the favourite object of all his former enterprizes. Although he was now advanced in age and worn out with fatigue, he offered, with all the ardour of youth, to undertake a voyage which should ascertain this important point, which offer was accepted.

Q. What induced the king of Spain to comply with this request?

A. The Portuguese fleet, under Cabral, had just arrived from the Indies, laden with riches; and the Spanish monarch expected to reap still greater advantages, when a nearer and less dangerous passage to the East was discovered.

Q. Did he succeed in his last voyage?

A. No; many causes combined to frustrate his object, and he had to encounter the most appalling dangers from the mutinous spirit of

his men, as well as from violent hurricanes, and at length he was shipwrecked on the coast of Jamaica.

Q. How did the natives behave to the Spaniards?

A. At first they treated them kindly, but soon grew weary of supplying them with provisions; and had not Columbus thought of a happy artifice to restore the high opinion that the natives had originally entertained of them, in all probability they must have perished there.

Q. What was it?

A. By his skill in astronomy, Columbus knew there was shortly to be an eclipse of the moon. He therefore assembled all the principal Indians the day before it happened, and told them that the Great Spirit who dwells in heaven was offended with them for refusing to supply men who were objects of his peculiar favour, and was preparing to punish them for their disobedience; and that very night the moon should withhold her light, and appear of a bloody hue, as a sign of the divine wrath.

Q. How did they receive this prediction?

A. Some with careless indifference, others with credulous astonishment; but when the moon began to be gradually darkened, and at length appeared red, they were all struck with terror, and ran to Columbus with provisions in abundance, entreating him to intercede with the Great Spirit and save them from destruction.

Q. Did Columbus pretend to comply with the entreaties?

A. Yes; and as the eclipse went off and the

moon resumed her splendour, the uninformed savages were more than ever impressed with the idea that the Spaniards were a superior race of beings, and accordingly in future did every thing they could to accommodate them.

Q. How did he at length find means to leave the island?

A. Two of his most faithful companions sailed from thence in a canoe, and after great difficulty reached Hispaniola, where at last they prevailed on the governor to send ships to take their companions on board.

Q. What did Columbus do on his arrival at Hispaniola?

A. When he arrived at Hispaniola, he immediately prepared to return to Spain, his constitution being now worn out by repeated fatigues, and his heart broken by the injustice of his countrymen.

Q. Did not ill fortune still attend him?

A. Yes; one of his vessels was disabled by a violent storm, and forced to return, and the other, in which the admiral was, sailed seven hundred leagues with jury-masts*, and with great difficulty at last reached Spain.

Q. What more have you to relate of the life of Columbus?

A. That his health rapidly declined, and the Spanish monarch was too illiberal to reward the man who had encountered such hardships and served him with such fidelity. He died at Valladolid, in 1506, aged 59 years.

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* Jury-masts are poles set up to supply the place of masts which have been destroyed.

## CHAP. V.

### *The first Invasion of the American Continent by the Spaniards.*

Q. By what means did the Spaniards endeavour to increase their riches after the death of Columbus?

A. Instead of the mild treatment which the natives experienced from Columbus, every cruelty was now exercised on them to make them dig in the mines and discover the gold which the islands of Hispaniola and Cuba contained, and which the Spaniards suspected the natives endeavoured to conceal.

Q. What was the result of this?

A. The natives, who were weak and unaccustomed to labour, gradually sunk under the severities which their task-masters imposed on them, and whenever they remonstrated with the Spaniards they were treated as rebels and hanged.

Q. Who was the governor of Hispaniola at this time?

A. Nicholas de Ovanda, a Spanish knight, who had been formerly sent out to supersede Columbus.

Q. Did not the cruelties of the Spaniards greatly diminish the population?

A. Yes: not content with making the most abject slaves of the unhappy natives, they pursued them like wild animals into the forests, hunted them with dogs, and shot them; so that in fifteen years, from the time of its discovery by

Columbus, the population of Hispaniola was reduced from upwards of a million to sixty thousand, and that of Cuba in the same proportion.

Q. Had the Spaniards at this time made any settlement on the main land of America?

A. No; although it was ten years from the time of its discovery by Columbus.

Q. Who now attempted to take possession of it?

A. Two Spaniards, one named Alonzo de Ojeda, the other Diego de Nicuessa; the former commanding three vessels and three hundred men, the latter, six vessels and seven hundred and eighty men.

Q. What authority had they?

A. They were authorised by the king of Spain to take possession of the country in his name, and to endeavour to convert the natives to Christianity; and if these poor uninstructed Indians refused to comply, they were ordered to attack them with fire and sword, and to reduce them and their families to a state of slavery.

Q. How did the Indians receive them?

A. The Indians could not conceive how a foreign prince could have any right to dispose of their country, or why they should change their religion; they, therefore, fiercely opposed the invaders, and being more warlike than the inhabitants of the islands, most of the Spaniards were destroyed.

Q. What men, who afterwards rendered themselves famous in the conquest of America, accompanied these expeditions?

A. Francisco Pizarro, Fernando Cortes, and

Vasco de Balboa, the last of whom commanded a small colony which had settled at Santa Maria, near the gulf of Darien.

Q. How was the South Pacific Ocean discovered?

A. The Spaniards under Balboa, were in the habit of making excursions for the purpose of collecting gold from the natives, and in one of these they were informed by a young cazique*, who was astonished at hearing them quarrel about the division of the metal they had obtained, that if they travelled towards the south they would come to another ocean, near which such a wealthy kingdom was situated that their most common utensils were made of gold.

Q. How did the Spaniards receive this information?

A. Balboa and his companions were elated with the idea of acquiring such vast wealth as the conquest of this country seemed to promise; and he also concluded, that the ocean which the cazique mentioned must be the same that Columbus had so ardently desired to find.

Q. What preparations did he make?

A. He could only muster one hundred and ninety men, but they were hardy veterans, inured to the climate of America, and ready to follow him through every danger: and a thousand Indians attended them to carry their provisions.

Q. Was it long before Balboa discovered the South Sea?

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* The title given to an American chief, or governor of a province.

A. Though their guides had represented it as no more than a six day's journey, they had spent twenty-five in forcing their way through the woods and mountains, but at length when they came to the foot of a very high mountain, the Indians assured Balboa that from the top of it he should discover the object of his wishes.

Q. What did Balboa do on reaching the sea?

A. He rushed into the water with his sword and buckler, took possession of the ocean in the name of the king of Spain, and vowed to defend it against all his enemies.

Q. How did Balboa then proceed?

A. Having collected a considerable quantity of gold and pearls, and hearing that there was a very opulent country towards the south-east (which was afterwards found to be Peru) he returned to Santa Maria, and sent home accounts of his discoveries, thinking to return next season with a force sufficient to make a conquest of it.

Q. How did the king of Spain act when he received the information?

A. He appointed one Pedrarias Davila to the command of the isthmus of Darien, and unjustly deprived Balboa of the reward due to his services: in a short time after he was arrested by Davila on pretence of disloyalty, and publicly executed.

Q. What progress had been made in the discovery of America by the different European nations at this time?

A. In the space of twenty-five years the Spaniards had visited all the islands which lie between North and South America, they had also sailed

along the eastern coast of the continent from the river Plate to the farther end of the Gulf of Mexico, and they had discovered the coast of Florida.

Q. What discoveries had at that time been made by other nations?

A. The English had discovered that part of the American continent which reaches from Labrador to the confines of Florida, and the Portuguese had also made several discoveries in the northern seas, as well as in South America.

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## CHAP. VI.

### *The Conquest of Mexico.*

Q. WHO first invaded Mexico?

A. Fernando Cortes, an enterprising and brave Spaniard, who united in himself all the qualities necessary for the command of an army.

Q. Describe his qualities.

A. He was passionately fond of a military life, and excelled in all warlike exercises, calm yet resolute, possessing indefatigable activity and sound judgment, with the art of gaining the esteem and confidence of his men. In his person he was graceful, his aspect was winning yet commanding, and his constitution so vigorous that he was able to endure almost any fatigue.

Q. From what place did he sail, and what was the amount of his forces?

A. He sailed from Cuba, with about 600 men, 18 horses, and a few pieces of artillery; and with this inconsiderable force he proposed to subdue the most powerful state on the continent of America.

Q. What kind of country was Mexico?

A. The empire of Mexico was rich and powerful, inhabited by millions of Indians passionately fond of war, and at that time governed by a prince named Montezuma, whose fame in arms was the admiration of the neighbouring states.

Q. Were not the Mexicans very superior in point of civilization to the other Indians?

A. Yes: the inhabitants of Mexico were an intelligent and polished people; and their empire had subsisted for ages. Their knowledge in the arts was by no means confined, and their skill in military affairs was the admiration of their neighbours; while their government was founded on the sure basis of laws combined with religion.

Q. Was not the capital of their empire remarkable for its splendour?

A. Yes: Mexico, the capital, which was situated on the middle of a spacious lake, was the proudest monument of American industry and art. Its buildings were all of stone, and the squares and market places were remarkable for their spaciousness and grandeur. The shops glittered with gold and silver, and the royal palaces were erected on columns of jasper, and contained every thing that was useful and valuable.

Q. What opposition did the Spaniards meet with?

A. They were too feebly resisted by the natives

to oppose their progress, and in fact very little exertion was used in the first instance to oppose them; and it was not long before Cortes and his followers were reinforced by two caziques who were dissatisfied with their emperor, and resolved on becoming independent.

Q. How did Montezuma receive the Spaniards when they approached his capital?

A. He sent Cortes some valuable presents of gold and silver, allowed him and his companions a palace to reside in, and treated them in every respect with the greatest kindness and attention.

Q. Did the Spaniards believe him to be sincere?

A. No: they suspected that some plot for their destruction was concealed under these appearances of friendship, and a circumstance soon after occurred which afforded Cortes a pretext for commencing hostilities.

Q. What was that?

A. Cortes had established a small garrison at Vera Cruz, and he had learned that during his absence his garrison had been attacked and a Spaniard killed in the action; and that, to destroy a belief which prevailed among the natives that the Spaniards were immortal, Montezuma had given orders that the head of the Spaniard should be carried through all his provinces and publicly exhibited.

Q. How did he act on receiving this information?

A. He went in person to the emperor, and upbraided him with it, but Montezuma denied being privy to the circumstance, and he assured

Cortes that he was willing to do any thing to remove all cause of jealousy or suspicion between his subjects and the Spaniards.

Q. What proof of sincerity did Cortes require of him?

A. He required that Montezuma should leave his own palace, and reside with the Spaniards, who should treat him with all the honours due to his illustrious station; this demand the too credulous emperor acquiesced in.

Q. How did Cortes use his royal guest?

A. He allowed him to enjoy every mark of royalty except his freedom: and having obtained a thorough knowledge of his character, he took every opportunity to flatter all his tastes and passions, wishing to secure the possession of the country by the apparent consent of its prince.

Q. Was Montezuma so weak as to become the dupe of such an artifice?

A. Yes: whenever there was any complaint made by the Spaniards against the conduct of the Mexicans, Montezuma was the first to teach them submission: if a tumult was excited through the avarice or cruelty of the Spaniards, Montezuma was seen on the battlements to enforce order. In short, he became the tool of his conquerors instead of the defender of his country.

Q. What happened to him owing to his pusillanimity?

A. One day when he was thus shamefully disgracing his character by justifying the oppressions of the Spaniards, the Mexicans were so enraged, that flights of arrows and vollies of stones

poured in upon the ramparts, and a stone from an unknown hand, struck him on the temple, and severely wounded him.

Q. What effect had this accident on the mind of Montezuma?

A. It brought him to a sense of his degradation, and he indignantly scorned to survive this last humiliation. He would not receive either comfort or assistance from the Spaniards; but tore the bandage from his wounds, and refused to take nourishment with such obstinacy, that he died in a few days, rejecting all the solicitations of the Spaniards who tried to make him embrace Christianity.

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## CHAP. VII.

### *The Conquest of Mexico, (continued).*

Q. WHAT happened on the death of Montezuma?

A. Cortes found that the hatred which the Mexicans bore the Spaniards was now so violent that he made preparations to retreat: but the Mexicans had taken possession of a high tower which overlooked the Spanish quarters, and were determined to oppose him.

Q. What followed?

A. Cortes endeavoured to dislodge them from this situation, and a tremendous conflict took place. At length Cortes gained the platform, when two young Mexicans resolved to sacrifice their own lives in order to destroy the man whom

they considered as the author of all their calamity.

Q. How did they attempt this?

A. They approached him in a supplicating posture, as if they had intended to lay down their arms, and seizing him in a moment, hurried him towards the battlements, over which they threw themselves headlong, hoping to drag him along with them, to be dashed to pieces by the same fall.

Q. Did they succeed?

A. No: by his superior strength and activity, Cortes disengaged himself from their grasp, and the patriotic youths perished in their generous, though unsuccessful attempt to save their country.

Q. Did Cortes, after this, effect his retreat unmolested?

A. No: although he afterwards endeavoured to retreat in the night, the Mexicans had watched all his motions, and while the Spaniards were occupied in passing over the causeway which led across the lake, they were suddenly alarmed with a tremendous shout, and assailed with arrows and stones from numerous canoes which covered the lake.

Q. What was the consequence?

A. The Spaniards were unable to sustain the attack, and the darkness of the night rendered their situation most desperate. Horse and foot, enemies and friends were all mingled together, and while all fought, and many fell, they could hardly distinguish from what hand the blow came.

Q. What loss did Cortes' army sustain on this occasion?

A. Many officers of distinction perished; all the artillery, ammunition, and baggage were lost; more than half of the Spaniards, and above two thousand of their Tlascalan * allies were killed, and a very little of the treasure which they had amassed was saved.

Q. Did not some reinforcements arrive at this critical juncture?

A. Yes: fortunately for Cortes, two new adventurers arrived at Vera Cruz, who intended to share in the glory of conquering New Spain; but Cortes succeeded in winning their men over to his interest.

Q. With what forces was he now able to take the field?

A. He had 550 infantry, 40 horsemen, and nine pieces of artillery; besides ten thousand Tlascalans. He therefore marched towards Mexico in the full expectation of retrieving his late disaster.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *The Conquest of Mexico (continued).*

Q. WHOM did the Mexicans elect as emperor on the death of Montezuma?

A. His brother Quetlavaca, a man distinguished for his courage and capacity. He summoned the people in every province to take arms

* The Tlascalans were tributary to the Mexicans; and being anxious to regain their independence had joined the Spaniards soon after Cortes arrived on the continent.

against the Spaniards and arranged his system of defence on a regular plan; but having caught the small-pox, he died soon after he ascended the throne.*

Q. Who filled his place?

A. His son-in-law, named Guatimozin, a young man of such high reputation for abilities and valour, that his countrymen unanimously elected him as their emperor.

Q. Was not the siege of Mexico now carried on with great fury?

A. Yes; on land, on water, by night and by day, one furious conflict succeeded another; and the situation of the Spaniards was at one time most desperate, Cortes having been wounded by the Mexicans, and forty Spaniards taken prisoners, besides numbers who fell in the action.

Q. How did the Mexicans treat their prisoners?

A. They sacrificed them to their god of war, and sent their heads to their leading men in the adjacent provinces, assuring them that the god of war, appeased by the blood of their enemies, had declared that in eight days time their enemies would be finally destroyed.

Q. How did Cortes act when he heard of this confident prediction.

A. He saw that the fidelity of his allies was shaken, and that even the Spaniards dreaded its fulfilment. He therefore suspended all military operations during the period mentioned by the

* This distemper, which raged at that time in New Spain, had been introduced there by the Spaniards, and may be considered as one of the greatest calamities their invaders brought upon them.

oracle, and kept his men on the lake, defended by the vessels which he had brought thither.

Q. What effect had this?

A. The most fortunate for Cortes that could be imagined. The eight days having expired without any disaster, the confidence of the Spaniards returned, and many native tribes judging that the gods of the Mexicans had abandoned them, now joined the standard of Cortes, and in a short time one hundred and fifty thousand Indians were added to his forces.

Q. What was the fate of Guatimozin?

A. He was taken prisoner, with the empress his wife, and many of his nobility; but his spirit was unsubdued, and his words and actions displayed the magnanimity of his mind.

Q. In what terms did he address Cortes when he was brought before him?

A. "I have done," said he, "what became a monarch. I have defended my people to the last extremity. Nothing now remains but to die. Take this dagger, (laying his hand on one which Cortes wore,) plant it in my breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be useful to my country."

Q. Did the siege of Mexico end with the capture of the emperor?

A. Yes; as the fate of their sovereign was known, the Mexicans surrendered, and Cortes took possession of that small part of the capital which remained undestroyed.

Q. Did not the Spaniards greatly exult in this conquest?

A. Yes; at first their joy was unbounded;

but when they found that all the gold and silver Mexico contained, did not amount to more than thirty thousand pounds sterling, their disappointment was in proportion to their former great expectations.

Q. How did the Spaniards behave towards the oppressed Mexicans?

A. They made use of every species of cruelty to extort treasure from them, and treated them in every respect as a race of inferior beings, over whom they had unlimited power.

Q. Was not the torture inflicted on the emperor himself?

A. Yes; Gautimozin was laid on burning coals by order of the king of Spain's receiver-general, to make him confess into what part of the lake he had thrown his treasure.

Q. What incident is related of him while he was thus suffering?

A. The high-priest who lay stretched alongside of the emperor enduring the same torture, loudly expressed his sense of the pains that he endured; upon which Guatimozin said, "Do you imagine I lie on a bed of roses?" Struck with the firmness which his sovereign displayed, the high-priest remained silent, and died in an act of obedience to him.

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## CHAP. IX.

### *The Conquest of Mexico (continued).*

Q. Did not the submission of the provinces follow the surrender of the capital?

A. Yes? the provinces submitted one after another to the conquerors; and the Spaniards penetrated in different quarters to the great Southern Ocean, which they supposed (as Columbus had formerly), would open a short and easy passage to the East Indies.

Q. Did Cortes attempt this important discovery?

A. No; while Cortes had been employed in reducing Mexico, an able navigator, named Ferdinand Magellan, had accomplished the undertaking; thus Spain had the honour of discovering in the course of a few years a new continent of immense extent, and of ascertaining the size of the whole globe.

Q. To what important post was Cortes elected?

A. He was appointed captain-general and governor of New Spain.

Q. How did he exercise his authority?

A. He endeavoured to render his conquest a sure and valuable aequisition to Spain. He began to re-build the city of Mexico, and constructed it on such a plan that it gradually became the most magnificent city in the New World.

Q. Was not the conduct of the Spaniards in general towards the Mexicans of the most brutal kind?

A. Yes; to their eternal disgrace, such scenes of blood and infamy are recorded as make the human heart shudder at the recital; but we refrain from entering into a particular description of events so degrading to humanity.

Q. Were not the successes of Cortes beheld with jealousy by the grandees of Spain?

A. Yes; they circulated such reports to his disadvantage, that it was thought necessary to send out a person with a commission to seize him and send him to Spain; which Cortes no sooner heard of than he set out for Spain, and vindicated his conduct so successfully, that his sovereign invested him with new titles of honour.

Q. Is there any thing more in his life connected with the History of America?

A. Nothing remarkable, except his discovery of California. He afterwards returned to his native country, but met with a reception very inadequate to his services—a fate that we find attended most people who were engaged in extending the Spanish empire.

Q. When did he die?

A. He died in the year 1547, in the sixty-second year of his age.

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## CHAP. X.

### *The Conquest of Peru.*

Q. WHO were the most conspicuous characters that engaged in the conquest of Peru?

A. Francisco Pizarro, Diego de Almagro, and Hernando Luque.

Q. Who was Pizarro?

A. Pizarro was the natural son of a gentleman of rank; but his mother being a very low woman, his education and future prospects were so totally neglected, that, when bordering on manhood, he was employed in keeping hogs, and could neither read nor write.

Q. What gave rise to his fame as a soldier?

A. He enlisted as a soldier and served in the Spanish army in Italy; after which he embarked for America, where he very soon distinguished himself by his courage.

Q. Who was Almagro?

A. Almagro had as little to boast of his descent as Pizarro, being a foundling; but being bred a soldier, he was equally brave and active. Both were natives of Panama.

Q. Were they possessed of similar qualities in other respects?

A. No; Almagro was open, generous, and candid. Pizarro united with his bravery, the address and dissimulation of a politician.

Q. Who was Hernando Luque?

A. He was a priest, but a man of considerable fortune, and of an ambitious turn of mind.

Q. What stations did they severally intend to fill?

A. Pizarro, who was the least wealthy, was to take the department of the greatest fatigue and danger, and to command the armament in person. Almagro was to conduct the supplies of provisions and reinforcements of troops; and Luque was to remain at Panama to negociate with the governor, and superintend whatever was necessary for their general interest.

Q. When did Pizarro embark?

A. He left Panama on the 14th November, 1524, with only one ship and 112 men; and so little was he acquainted with the nature of the voyage, that it was two years before he arrived at the northern extremity of Peru, though it is now frequently performed in a fortnight.

Q. At what place did Pizarro first have a view of the opulence of Peru?

A. At Tumbez, a city situated about three degrees south of the line. This place was distinguished for its *incas* or sovereigns of the country.

Q. What chiefly attracted his notice?

A. The profusion of gold and silver which he saw there. These valuable metals were not only used in ornamenting their persons and temples, but their drinking vessels and many other utensils in common use were made of them.

Q. Did Pizarro remain in Peru?

A. No; he merely took a sufficient view of the country to satisfy his own mind of its wealth, and then returning to Panama, taking with him two of their *lamas**, some vessels of gold and silver, and two young men, whom he intended to instruct as interpreters.

Q. Was not his voyage one of extreme danger?

A. Yes; no adventurer of the age suffered greater hardships or encountered dangers equal to Pizarro; but his fortitude and patience surpassed every thing that we read of even in that adventurous age.

Q. What plan did these three adventurers determine on?

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* The lama is an animal peculiar to Peru. It is about the size of a stag, having a head which partly resembles that of a horse and a sheep at the same time. Its upper lip is cleft, like that of a hare, through which, when enraged, it spits a kind of venemous juice, which inflames the part it falls on. The lama is used in Peru as a beast of burden, and is capable of bearing the greatest fatigue. It feeds very sparingly, and never drinks. Its flesh is both agreeable and wholesome, and its wool is very fine.

A. It was agreed that Pizarro should go into Spain to obtain the grant of whatever they should conquer. Pizarro was to be chief governor; Almagro, king's lieutenant; and Luque was to be the first bishop and protector of the Indians.

Q. When did Pizarro again invade Peru?

A. In the year 1532, and soon established a Spanish colony near Tumbez, to which he gave the name of St. Michael.

Q. What was the extent of the Peruvian empire when the Spaniards invaded it?

A. The Peruvian empire extended, in length, from north to south, 1500 miles along the Pacific Ocean. Its breadth was much less, being bounded throughout by the vast ridge of the Andes, which reached from one extremity to the other.

Q. By whom was this empire governed?

A. The Peruvian empire was governed by a race of *incas*, or kings, of whom Manco Capac, a man of great genius and capacity, was the founder.

Q. How did Manco Capac obtain the sovereignty?

A. Having observed that the Peruvians were naturally superstitious, and had a particular veneration for the Sun, he pretended to be descended from that luminary, whose worship he was sent to establish, and whose authority he was entitled to bear. Improbable as the story was, he by this means brought a large extent of territory under his jurisdiction.

Q. Did the Peruvians owe their state of civilization to him?

A. Yes; he united and civilized a people who

were before barbarous, subjected them to laws, trained them to arms, and instituted a mild and benevolent religion; in short, there was no part of America where the arts were so assiduously cultivated, and where the manners of the people were so amiable.

Q. Who was the inca of Peru when the Spaniards first arrived on that coast?

A. Huana Capac, who had subdued the neighbouring kingdom of Quito, which added greatly to the extent and power of the Peruvian empire.

Q. To whom did he leave his dominions at his death?

A. He bequeathed to his eldest son Huescar the kingdom of Peru; and to his son Atahualpa, whose mother was the daughter of the vanquished sovereign of Quito, he left that part of his dominions.

Q. What was the consequence?

A. Huescar, being discontented with his father's will, required his brother to resign the government of Quito, which Atahualpa refused, and marched against Huescar in hostile array.

Q. What followed?

A. A civil war took place, which greatly weakened the empire, and finally ended in the death of Huescar. At the time Pizarro landed, it raged with the greatest fury.

Q. Did it not facilitate the views of Pizarro?

A. Yes; on Pizarro's arrival, Atahualpa sought his alliance and assistance, and sent presents of great value as a proof of his sincerity.

Q. Where did Pizarro and Atahualpa first have an interview?

A. At Caxamalca, where Pizarro had established his quarters, and where he invited Atahualpa to come to him.

Q. Was not his visit attended with much ceremony?

A. Yes; he was seated on a throne, which was carried on the shoulders of his principal attendants, and adorned with various colours, and almost covered with plates of gold and silver, enriched with precious stones. Before him marched four hundred men, dressed alike; several bands of singers and dancers accompanied the cavalcade, and the whole plain was covered with troops, amounting to thirty thousand men.

Q. How did the Spaniards receive him?

A. As he drew near, father Valverde, the chaplain to the expedition, advanced, with a crucifix in one hand, and a breviary in the other, and in a long discourse attempted to convert him to the Catholic faith.

Q. What effect had his exhortation on the inca?

A. Atahualpa declared his resolution of adhering to the worship of the Sun; but, at the same time, he begged to be informed where the priest had learned the extraordinary things he had related.

Q. What reply did the priest make?

A. He told him he learned it from the book he had in his hand, which he held out to him. The inca opened the breviary, and turning over the leaves, raised it to his ear. "This," said he, "is silent, it tells me nothing:" and then threw it with disdain to the ground.

Q. What followed?

A. The enraged monk ran towards his countrymen, crying out, "To arms, Christians, to arms! The word of God is insulted; avenge the profanation on these impious dogs."

Q. Were the Spaniards base enough to make this circumstance a pretext for attacking the Peruvians?

A. Yes; the avaricious Spaniards, led by their brutal commander, immediately attacked the Peruvians, of whom they slaughtered near five thousand, and took their inca prisoner.

Q. Did not Atahualpa offer an immense ransom to recover his liberty?

A. Yes; he undertook to fill the apartment in which he was confined with vessels of gold as high as he could reach, although it was twenty-two feet long and sixteen feet wide.

Q. Was the gold produced?

A. Yes; his subjects brought in gold worth between three and four hundred thousand pounds sterling, which was divided among the Spaniards according to their rank. The share of each private soldier amounted to upwards of two thousand pounds; and the officers received shares in proportion.

Q. Was Atahualpa restored to his countrymen?

A. No; although he fulfilled his contract to the utmost, Pizarro not only detained him as his prisoner, but even planned schemes to take away his life.

Q. What charges did he bring against him for that purpose?

A. He charged him with offering up human

sacrifices, keeping a number of concubines, and having put his brother Huescar to death. He was tried by the Spaniards, found guilty, as his infamous judges had predetermined, and put to death.

## CHAP. XI.

### *The Conquest of Peru (continued).*

Q. Of what was Atahualpa's death productive?

A. It gave rise to great divisions among the Peruvians. The principal nobility of Cuzco, the capital of Peru, proclaimed the brother of Huescar as his successor; Pizarro set up a son of Atahualpa; and two Peruvian generals claimed the sovereign power for themselves.

Q. Was any compromise effected between these rivals for power?

A. No; they fought against each other: but as they became more accustomed to war and bloodshed, they grew less afraid of the Spaniards; and though at war among themselves, they sometimes united against their common enemy, whom they considered as the author of all their calamities.

Q. What success had they?

A. Their efforts for a time prevented their subjugation, and Pizarro concluded a truce with them. During this interval of repose the Spaniards laid the foundation of the famous city of Lima.

Q. Did not Pizarro break the truce as soon as a convenient opportunity offered itself?

A. Yes; having established himself more se-

curely in the country, he renewed the war, attacked Cuzco, and took possession of it.

Q. Was not an addition of territory granted to Pizarro and Almagro about this time?

A. Yes; the Spanish monarch granted to Pizarro two hundred leagues along the sea-coast, and to the southward of his former government; and two hundred leagues to the southward of Pizarro's were granted to Almagro.

Q. Did not this give rise to some disputes between them?

A. Yes; it seems to have been a doubtful point in whose territory the city of Cuzco lay. Both contended for it, but it was at length awarded to Pizarro, who persuaded Almagro that the country which really belonged to him was still farther to the south.

Q. What country was it?

A. The kingdom of Chili.

Q. Did Almagro endeavour to take possession of it?

A. Yes; Almagro penetrated, with much danger and difficulty, into Chili, losing many of his men in passing over mountains of immense height, and always covered with snow.

Q. What advantage did the Peruvians take of this division of the Spanish troops?

A. They laid siege to Cuzco with a large army, and were very near proving successful; but Almagro, hearing of the danger to which his countrymen were exposed, hastened back to their assistance.

Q. Who commanded the Spanish garrison in Cuzco?

A. Ferdinand and Gonzalvo, two brothers of Pizarro.

Q. Did Almagro take any undue advantage of them after he had defeated the Peruvians?

A. Yes; he threw them into prison and seized the city, which he meant to hold as his right by virtue of his late victory.

Q. Who arrived before Cuzco soon after?

A. Pizarro himself arrived with an army destined to oppose the Peruvians; for he was unacquainted with the arrival of Almagro.

Q. What followed?

A. Almagro, thinking himself more powerful than his rival, resolved to retain possession of Cuzco, which, however, he would not agree to. A long and desperate struggle ensued, and at length fortune declared in favour of Pizarro, who took Almagro prisoner.

Q. What was the ultimate fate of Almagro?

A. Pizarro, who was deaf to all entreaties that could be urged to spare his life, had him tried, condemned, and strangled in prison. His body was afterwards publicly beheaded on a scaffold, and for a long time denied burial.

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## CHAP. XII.

### *The Conquest of Peru (continued) from the Death of Almagro to that of Pizarro.*

Q. To whom did Almagro leave the territory which had been granted to him?

A. He left it to his only son, who at the time of his father's death was a prisoner at Lima.

Q. How did Pizarro now act?

A. He considered himself the unrivalled possessor of Peru, and proceeded to parcel out its territories in the most arbitrary manner, behaving with the basest tyranny and cruelty to all who had not concurred in his designs.

Q. On what did the partizans of Almagro resolve?

A. They resolved to be revenged; and Juan de Herrada, an officer of great abilities, who had the charge of young Almagro's education, took the direction of their consultations, and determined on the death of Pizarro.

Q. How did they put their determination into execution.

A. On the 26th of June, 1541, at mid-day, Herrada, at the head of eighteen of the most resolute of the conspirators, sallied out of Almagro's house, in complete armour, with their swords drawn, and rushed towards the governor's palace, crying out "Long live the King, and let the tyrant die."

Q. Was Pizarro prepared to receive them?

A. No; he had just risen from table as they entered, and most of his domestics had retired to their own apartments; he, however, seized his sword and buckler, and, supported by a few of his particular friends, maintained the unequal contest with the most heroic bravery; but, notwithstanding he fought with all the vigour of a youthful combatant, he at length fell, covered with wounds, and his companions shared the same fate.

Q. What did the conspirators then do?

A. They ran into the streets, waving their bloody swords, and proclaiming the death of the tyrant. After which they conducted young Almagro through the city, and compelled the magistrates and principal citizens to acknowledge him as their governor.

Q. Was he generally acknowledged by the Spaniards?

A. No; many of the governors in distant provinces refused to recognize his authority; and at Cuzco in particular, the royal standard was erected, and preparations were begun to revenge the death of Pizarro.

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## CHAP. XIII.

### *The Conquest of Peru (concluded).*

Q. Who was appointed to the government of Peru by the king of Spain?

A. Vasco de Castro, a gentleman of high reputation for justice and integrity, who was thought capable of healing the differences which had arisen among the Spaniards in the New World.

Q. Did Almagro oppose him?

A. Yes; but the force of Castro being superior, Almagro was defeated, with the loss of five hundred men killed, and many taken prisoners. Almagro escaped from the field of battle, but was afterwards taken, and publicly beheaded at Cuzco.

Q. How did the new governor conduct himself?

A. His conduct was of the most impartial kind;

and he proceeded to punish all delinquents with such constancy, that in a short time order was restored among the Spaniards, and the Indians were treated by them as fellow subjects and fellow creatures.

Q. What progress did he make in establishing the Spanish authority in Peru?

A. He caused justice to be administered impartially, founded new towns, established new schools, and placed the royal revenues on such a footing, that the conquest of Peru became a matter of great national importance.

Q. Did not Gonzalvo, the brother of Pizarro, oppose the new governor?

A. Yes; and as many flocked to his standard, he soon became powerful. He only paid a nominal submission to the king; and went so far as to behead a viceroy who was sent over to control him.

Q. Did not the Spanish government supersede De Castro?

A. Yes; the Spanish ministry, not having received any presents from De Castro, appointed a council to watch over his conduct; which we find to have been their invariable custom when those who exercised the government of their American dominions were too just to bribe them.

Q. Who was next sent out as governor?

A. Peter de la Gasca, a man equally just as De Castro, but of a more mild and insinuating behaviour. He was invested with the most ample authority from Spain to settle all differences, &c. but he carried with him neither men nor money to enforce it.

Q. How did he act on his arrival?

A. He declared that he did not come to exercise severities, but to conciliate all parties by gentle measures; but finding that Gonzalvo Pizarro would not yield to his authority, he attacked and defeated him, took him prisoner, and soon after had him executed as a traitor.

Q. What else is related of Gasca?

A. That having issued regulations to protect the Indians from oppression, and to provide for their instruction in religion, and having also established the Spanish goverment in Peru on the firmest basis, he retired from his high station, and set out for Spain, with three hundred thousand pounds of public money, which he had saved for the Spanish governnment by his economy.

Q. Did his conduct meet with a suitable return?

A. Yes; in this instance merit had its reward. Gasca was received by the king of Spain with every mark of esteem; he gave him the bishopric of Placentia, and the remainder of his life was passed in the tranquillity of retirement, respected by his sovereign and beloved by his countrymen.*

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* In reading the life of Peter de la Gasca every one must observe in what a conspicuous light his abilities and virtue appear. Without an army, a fleet, or public funds, he set out to oppose a formidable rebellion; and, by his address and good management alone, he raised a body of men able to contend with and conquer those daring bands which gave law to Peru; and, in the place of anarchy, he established a regular government. His virtue, however, far exceeded his abilities. After possessing unlimited power in a country where wealth presented such allurements, he returned with unsuspected integrity: and although he had distributed among his countrymen possessions of great ex-

## CHAP. XIV.

### *Containing a brief Account of the Political Institutions and Manners of the Mexicans.*

Q. In what were the Mexicans and Peruvians different from the other native Americans?

A. In point of civilization they greatly exceeded all the other Americans, in comparison with whom they might be reckoned a polished and wealthy people.

Q. How long had the empire of Mexico been in existence?

A. At the time the Spaniards arrived there the Mexican empire had been in existence about three hundred years.

Q. What was the form of government in Mexico?

A. The Mexican government was very similar to the feudal government of ancient Britain. The nobility possessed almost independent authority; the people were in the lowest state of subjection; and the king was entrusted with the executive power of the state; but all the real power was in the hands of the nobles.

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tent and value, he himself remained so poor, that he was obliged to apply to his sovereign for a small sum of money, to enable him to defray some trifling debts he had incurred during the course of his service. On his retiring from Peru, party feuds again broke out, but the effects of his wise administration remained, and the royal authority of Spain was gradually established there.

Q. Was the right of property well understood by them?

A. Perfectly. Every person who could be denominated a freeman had property in land: others derived their title to lands by the offices of dignity they enjoyed, and when deprived of the latter the former was also taken from them. These modes of occupying land were deemed noble, and belonged to citizens of the highest class.

Q. How did the common people hold their property.

A. In every district a certain quantity of land was measured out, which was given to a certain number of families, and cultivated by their joint labour; the produce of it was afterwards deposited in a common storehouse, and divided among them according to their several wants.

Q. What benefit resulted from this distribution?

A. It being a permanent property, destined for the support of their families, every man had an interest in its welfare, and public security was connected with individual happiness.

Q. Were the Mexicans subject to taxes?

A. Yes; although the use of money was unknown to them, taxes in kind were collected for the purpose of supplying the emperor's attendants during peace, and his armies in time of war.

Q. How were the taxes laid?

A. The taxes were imposed according to established rules. They were laid on land, upon the acquisitions of industry, and upon all commodities exposed to public sale in the markets. Those persons who had no property were bound to assist in cultivating the crown-lands, and in keeping the palaces in repair, &c.

Q. Had not the Mexicans an established police?

A. Yes; their attention was particularly directed to it. Public couriers were stationed at proper distances along the roads, to convey intelligence from one part of the empire to another; watchmen patroled the streets at night; and such other regulations were adopted for the public security, as denote the manners of a civilized nation.

Q. Were not the necessary arts and useful trades carried on in Mexico?

A. Yes; people were regularly instructed in separate trades as they are in Europe; and they had their painters, masons, goldsmiths, weavers, &c. who exercised their respective arts with a considerable degree of skill.

Q. How did they compute their time?

A. The Mexicans divided the year into eighteen months, each consisting of twenty days, amounting in all to three hundred and sixty; to these they added five days more, which they termed supernumerary; and as they did not belong to any month, they were wholly devoted to festivity and pastime.

Q. What were their propensities in time of war?

A. Though in other respects they were civilized, yet the Mexicans were equally barbarous in their mode of warfare, as the most savage tribes. They never ransomed or spared their prisoners; but sacrificed them to their god of war, and devoured their flesh with horrid brutality.

Q. Were not their funeral rites equally barbarous?

A. Yes; it was their custom when a man of rank died, and particularly their emperor, to doom a certain number of his attendants to death; they were buried in the same tomb with him, and were supposed to accompany him to the other world.

Q. What was the nature of their religion?

A. Superstition in the highest degree. Their divinities were clothed in terror and delighted in vengeance. The most rigid penances were performed by the Mexicans to appease the wrath of their gods, and they never approached their altars without sprinkling them with blood drawn from their own bodies.

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## CHAP. XV.

### *The Manners and Customs of the Peruvians.*

Q. WHAT accounts have been transmitted of the ancient history of Peru?

A. The empire of Peru was more ancient than that of Mexico; but owing to their being unacquainted with the art of writing, they were destitute of the means of preserving the knowledge of past events with any degree of accuracy.

Q. You mentioned in a former chapter that the Peruvians were indebted to Manco Capac for their civilization: what was his origin?

A. His origin is unknown. That he was a man of very superior knowledge and abilities to the Indians in general is very evident, by the great change he effected in the people.

Q. In what capacity did he appear amongst them?

A. He appeared as the immediate messenger of heaven, and his injunctions were rigidly obeyed. His race was held to be sacred, and so firmly did the Peruvians believe in his celestial descent, that his offspring were denominated *children of the Sun.*

Q. Was not the authority of the inca unlimited?

A. Yes; the authority of the Peruvian inca was absolute; and all offences committed against him being considered as insults offered to the deity, were punished capitally?

Q. What were the objects of Peruvian adoration?

A. They worshipped the sun, as the great source of light, of joy, and fertility; and they considered that the moon and the stars, as co-operating with him, were entitled to secondary homage.

Q. In what did the Peruvians chiefly differ from the Mexicans?

A. In the mildness of their manners and the beneficence of their religion.

Q. Of what did the Peruvian offerings and sacrifices consist?

A. The Peruvians offered to the sun a part of their vegetable productions; and sacrificed, as an oblation of gratitude, some of the animals which were indebted to his influence for nourishment. But the incas never stained their altars with human blood, nor could they conceive that their benificent father, the sun, would be delighted with such horrid sacrifices.

Q. How were the lands of the Peruvians divided?

A. All the lands capable of cultivation were divided into three shares: one was consecrated to the sun and the rites of religion; the second was appropriated to the use of the inca; and the third and largest share was divided among the people.

Q. Did the lands thus divided among the people become their permanent property?

A. No; every year a new division of their lands took place, which was regulated according to the rank, the number, and exigencies of each family.

Q. How were the lands cultivated?

A. By the joint industry of the people, who were regularly summoned to the field by officers appointed for the purpose; while they were cheered to the performance of their task by songs and musical instruments.

Q. Ought we not to attribute the docility of their manners to these wise and innocent regulations?

A. Undoubtedly; a community thus constituted will naturally produce gentle manners and mild virtues; and the members of it may be considered as one great family whose interests are inseparable.

Q. What were the degrees of rank among the Peruvians?

A. The lowest order of the people resembled such as are employed in menial offices in other countries, and were held in a state of servitude; next to them were the freemen who were distinguished by no official or hereditary honours;

the next in rank were such as held official situations, and were distinguished by their birth; and at the head of all were the relations of the inca, or *Children of the Sun*.

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## CHAP. XVI.

### *View of the other Spanish Possessions in America.*

Q. Do not the Spaniards possess a great extent of territory in America besides Mexico and Peru?

A. Yes; although Mexico and Peru are the chief sources from which Spain derives her wealth, yet her jurisdiction extends over several other provinces.

Q. Enumerate the principal.

A. The immense kingdoms of New Navarre and New Mexico; the peninsula of California; the provinces of Yucatan and Honduras; Chili; Tucuman; La Plata; Terra Firma; New Grenada, and several islands.

Q. Are these countries wholly under the dominion of the Spaniards?

A. Some are wholly under the dominion of the Spaniards; others only partially so; but the number of Spaniards setttled in these provinces is extremely small compared with those who reside in Mexico and Peru.

Q. For what is *New Mexico* and *New Navarre* remarkable?

A. For their rich mines of gold and silver, and for the salubrity of the climate, being situated in the most delightful part of the temperate zone.

Q. For what is *California* chiefly valuable?

A. The peninsula of California is highly valuable for the pearls found on its coast.

Q. For what are the provinces of *Yucatan* and *Honduras* mostly esteemed?

A. These provinces derive their value principally from the logwood tree, which, for the purposes of dying, has become an article in commerce of considerable consequence.

Q. Is not *Chili* a very fine country?

A. Yes: its climate is the most delicious in the New World; and it is not only very fertile, but is peculiarly adapted to the growth of European productions, both vegetable and animal.

Q. Does it contain any valuable mines?

A. Yes; it is stored with mines of gold, silver, copper, and lead.

Q. Is the whole of Chili under the dominion of the Spaniards?

A. No; the mountainous parts of the country are still possessed by tribes of original inhabitants. That part of Chili which may properly be considered a Spanish province is a narrow district, extending along the coast for more than nine hundred miles.

Q. What do the provinces of *Tucuman* and *La Plata* comprehend?

A. These provinces border on Chili, and comprehend a district reaching one thousand three hundred miles from north to south, and more than a thousand miles in breadth.

Q. By whom are these provinces inhabited?

A. They are inhabited chiefly by native Americans.

Q. Which is the principal town?

A. Buenos Ayres, which is also the most considerable sea-port in South America, and from hence a great part of the treasure of Chili and Peru is exported to Spain.

Q. Of what extent are the provinces of *Terra Firma* and *New Grenada?*

A. Terra Firma extends along the Atlantic from the eastern frontier of New Spain to the mouth of the river Orinoco. New Grenada is situated in the interior country.

Q. What is the capital of Terra Firma?

A. The city of Panama, where all the treasures which the rich mines of Peru and Chili pay to the king of Spain are brought.

Q. What other town in Terra Firma deserves notice?

A. Carthagena, where the galleons, in their voyage from Spain, put in first, and dispose of a considerable part of their cargo, consisting of every kind of merchandize.

Q. Is not the climate of Grenada remarkably temperate?

A. Yes; Grenada is so far advanced above the level of the sea, that though it is very near to the equator, yet the climate is remarkably temperate.

Q. What does it produce?

A. It yields gold in great abundance. Its towns are populous and flourishing, and industry is much encouraged there.

## CHAP. XVII.

### *Sketch of the late Revolution in Spanish America.*

Q. At what period did the spirit of insurrection in the Spanish provinces of South America first appear?

A. In the year 1810, at a time when Spain herself was involved in all the horrors of internal war, caused by the perfidy of the French emperor, whose troops had, under the colour of protecting, invaded the kingdom, and made the Royal Family of Spain prisoners.

Q. To what causes may this insurrection be attributed?

A. The Spanish Americans had long considered themselves an aggrieved and oppressed people. Their commerce was much restricted, and they were excluded by the Spanish government from all places of profit, trust, and power, in the administration of the provinces; which were now more than ever filled by needy adventurers from the mother country.

Q. Did the South American Spaniards take immediate advantage of the distressed state of Spain to establish their own independence?

A. No; at first they showed a great readiness to support the cause of Spain, and made liberal contributions for the purpose; but the disunion among the Spaniards at home induced them to look forward to their own independence; though

they concealed their ultimate intentions by making the warmest professions of loyalty towards king Ferdinand.

Q. In what parts of South America did the revolutionary flame burst forth?

A. In the provinces of Caraccas, Cumana, Barinas, Margarita, Barcelona, Merida, and Truxillo, which united as federative governments, under the appellation of the American Confederation of Venezuela.

Q. Were there not many who adhered to the authority of the Spanish provisional government?

A. Yes; the Spanish American colonies were divided into two parties, the Loyalists and the Independents; and their dissensions soon fermented into flames of civil war.

Q. What part did the British government take in these dissensions?

A. The British government declared its intention to discourage all attempts that might be made by the Americans to shake off the allegiance they owed to Spain; but if the French should succeed in conquering that country, then Great Britain would assist the colonists in preserving Spanish America from the domination of the French, and make that part of the globe the seat of the Spanish government.

Q. How were hostilities carried on in the Spanish colonies?

A. The horrors of civil war raged with more than usual fury. In many instances no quarter was given on either side; the Loyalists called their opponents *rebels*, and treated their prisoners

accordingly; while the Insurgents* retaliated with the most vindictive cruelty.

Q. Who made a conspicuous figure in the Insurgent army?

A. General Miranda, a native of South America, who had lately been in England, but who returned, and was entrusted with the chief military command.

Q. What operation of consequence did he first undertake?

A. On assuming the command, he made it one of his first objects to reduce the city of New Valencia, which held for the mother country.

Q. How did he succeed?

A. In his first attack, he suffered considerable loss; but at length (August 18, 1811,) he obliged the inhabitants to surrender at discretion, after which he put the garrison to the sword, and gave up the city to pillage.

Q. Was not the extensive province of La Plata soon after the scene of civil war?

A. Yes; Buenos Ayres, the capital of La Plata, and the greatest part of the province, espoused the cause of the Independents; while the inhabitants of the town of Montevideo supported the authority of the mother country.

Q. Were not the English particularly interested in the affairs of Buenos Ayres?

A. Yes; each party having by turns the advantage, the port of Buenos Ayres was kept in a state of blockade, and a stop put to all com-

* We have intentionally used both the term *Independents* and *Insurgents;* the former word being applied by themselves, and the latter by their enemies.

merce, which was very injurious to our merchants, whose cargoes were lying there.

Q. What were the principal military operations in that quarter in 1811?

A. The siege of Montevideo by the Independents, and the defeat of Elio, the Spanish viceroy.

Q. Who offered to mediate between the parties?

A. The British government; but its mediation, though accepted, led to no permanent tranquillity.

Q. What part of Spanish America was visited by an earthquake in 1812?

A. The province of Venezuela. On the 26th of March, a violent shock of an earthquake was felt at the city of Caracas, which overturned the greatest part of its buildings, and buried a great number of the inhabitants in its ruins. The port of La Guara, and several other towns in the province, shared in the same dreadful calamity.*

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* Some idea of this awful event may be formed from the following extract of a letter sent from thence by a British naval officer:—

"Since my arrival here, one of the greatest calamities has occurred at this place that ever happened in any country. On the 26th ult. whilst on board, I heard a most dreadful report of an earthquake: it lasted, as nearly as my recollection will serve, about two minutes. I soon learnt that the town of La Guara was laid in ruins, and that numbers of the inhabitants were killed and buried in them. The city of Caracas, I understand, has experienced a still worse fate, and has been totally abandoned by the unfortunate inhabitants. The rocks and mountains were rent asunder; and it is impossible for pen to describe the devastation occasioned by this horrible explosion. The cargo which I was to have taken on board has shared the fate of nearly all the goods in the city, and has been swallowed up

Q. Did not the revolutionary spirit soon spread through the Spanish American provinces?

A. Yes; almost every part of the Spanish dominions in America exhibited a similar aspect. The rich and extensive provinces of Mexico, Peru, and Chili were now engaged in civil war, and little attention was paid to those mines, which had been so long the fruitful source of wealth.

Q. Which party gained the ascendancy in 1813?

A. So contradictory were the statements of the opposite parties, that it is difficult to determine which had the advantage; but on the whole it appears that the independent cause gained ground to the south of the isthmus, and that of the Spanish government in Mexico.

Q. What were the first operations of the following year?

A. An extraordinary gazette of the government of Mexico, dated January the 3d, communicated the intelligence of the complete rout of the forces of Morelos and other Insurgent chiefs, in the province of Valladolid, with the loss of 30 pieces of

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in the general ruin. When the shock was first felt on board, every person was impressed with the feeling that the ship was beating to pieces on the rocks. On my going on shore, the most awful and afflicting scene presented itself: hundreds of the suffering inhabitants were seen mixed with heaps of ruins, and many of them still yet alive with their heads out, imploring assistance from their fellow-citizens, who, instead of affording them aid, were throwing themselves prostrate before images, beating their breasts, and imploring for themselves the protection of their saints. When the alarm had in some degree subsided, the bodies of the dead were sought for. I regret I have not been able to ascertain the extent of the loss which this hapless city has sustained; but the most moderate accounts estimate it at 5000 souls."

cannon, their ammunition, and provisions; and 1500 men in killed and prisoners; of the latter, 200 were shot, *by way of example to the other rebels.*

Q. Did not the Loyalists suffer a great loss this year in the surrender of Montevideo?

A. Yes; Montevideo, which had sustained such a long blockade by sea and land, was obliged to capitulate, and large quantities of arms, artillery, military and naval stores, fell into the hands of the victors.

Q. Was not this advantage counterbalanced by the defeat of the Insurgents in Venezuela?

A. Yes; both parties had been for a long time collecting their whole strength, for the purpose of deciding the fate of that province by a general engagement, which took place in the vallies of Arazua, where the Royalists gained a complete victory, and afterwards took possession of the city of Caraccas.

Q. Were not considerable reinforcements sent from Spain in 1815?

A. Yes; an expedition, designed for the reduction of the Insurgents, arrived at Porto Cabello, consisting of five ships of the line, six frigates, and seventy-six transports, with 12,000 troops on board, under the command of General Morillo.

Q. Did this force change the aspect of affairs?

A. Very little, for the Insurgents were enabled to send a very effective force to oppose it; and the attempt of Spain to recover its authority in the colonies was still unsuccessful.

Q. In what state was Spanish America in 1816?

A. Quite as unsettled as ever. The weakness of the Spanish government prevented any vigorous

efforts for the restoration of its authority over the colonies, and their own want of concert disabled them from establishing their independence.

Q. What was supposed to be their condition in 1817?

A. It was believed in Europe that the Independent party was gaining ground, and most extraordinary accounts of their victories continued to appear in the English newspapers.

Q. Were not their partisans very active in obtaining reinforcements from England?

A. Yes; great numbers were induced, by the flattering accounts that were brought to this country, to enlist in the Independent army, and many received commissions as captains, &c. who had before been officers in the British service.

Q. What measures were adopted by the British government in consequence?

A. At the close of the year, the Prince Regent issued a proclamation, forbidding any British subjects to take a part in the contest between Spain and her colonies, for the purpose of putting a stop to the emigration that was going on.

Q. How has the war been carried on since?

A. On the whole, the Independent forces have had the advantage, and their cause seems to be gradually gaining ground; for, notwithstanding the prohibiting proclamation just mentioned, great numbers of recruits have been enlisted and sent out by their partisans; while the Spaniards have suffered from domestic treachery, the troops which were collected at Cadiz, for the purpose of embarking in the grand expedition that had been a long time in preparation, having mutinied, and thus frustrated the intention of their government.

Q. Did not one of the Independent generals sustain a signal defeat?

A. Yes; Sir Gregory M'Gregor, a bold and enterprising chief, having taken Porto Bello by a decisive manœuvre, was afterwards surprised, his troops totally defeated, and his own life with difficulty saved, by jumping out of his bed, and swimming to his ships in the harbour.

Q. Has tranquillity been restored?

A. No; the flame of civil war still desolates the plains of South America; and the rancour of the contending parties has contributed to render this fertile country little better than a wilderness. Those adventurers who left Europe, with the expectation of making their fortunes, have in general been miserably disappointed; and, from the present state of affairs, there appears to be no immediate prospect of permanent tranquillity.

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## CHAP. XVIII.

### *History of the Portuguese Settlements in America.*

Q. What part of America belongs to the Portuguese?

A. Brazil and part of Amazonia?

Q. What is the extent of Brazil?

A. Brazil reaches from the river Amazon to that of La Plata; being two thousand five hundred miles long, and seven hundred broad.

Q. For what is Brazil noted?

A. For its gold and diamond mines; the annual value of the former is about five millions sterling;

and of the latter, there are supposed to be sent to Europe to the amount of £130,000 annually.

Q. What other productions has Brazil?

A. Sugar, tobacco, hides, indigo, and various drugs used in medicine.

Q. What are the chief cities of Brazil?

A. St. Salvador and Rio de Janeiro.

Q. Has not Brazil lately become the seat of the Portuguese government?

A. Yes; in 1807, the queen of Portugal, with all the royal family, and many of the nobility, sailed from the Tagus. They were accompanied by 18,000 Portuguese subjects, and arrived at Brazil, which has since been the seat of government.

Q. What was the cause of this emigration?

A Bonaparte had ordered the Portuguese to shut all their ports against the ships of Great Britain, and there was every reason to expect that Portugal would soon be in the possession of the French, which soon afterwards was the case; therefore, to preserve their friendly and commercial relations with the English, as well as to secure their American possessions, this measure was at length decided on.

Q. By whom was *Amazonia* discovered?

A. By Francisco Orellans, in 1580, who, in returning from Peru, sailed down the river Amazon to the Atlantic ocean.

Q. Why did he give it the name of Amazonia?

A. He called it Amazonia, or the Land of the Amazons, in consequence of his observing several companies of women in arms, who were drawn up on the banks of the river.

Q. By whom is this extensive region inhabited?

A. It is inhabited by numerous Indian nations, governed by their respective caziques, who are distinguished from their subjects by wearing coronets of beautiful feathers.

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## CHAP. XIX.

### *Of the Original Inhabitants of America.*

Q. In what state were the inhabitants of America when the Europeans first settled there?

A. Except the inhabitants of Peru and Mexico, the natives of America were in a state of barbarism, being unacquainted with almost every art; and agriculture itself was hardly known to them.

Q. How, then, did they procure the necessaries of life?

A. By hunting wild animals, which their forests and mountains supplied in great abundance.

Q. Describe their appearance.

A. The complexion of the American Indians is of a reddish brown, nearly resembling the colour of copper; their muscles are firm and strong; their bodies and heads flattish; their hair long, black, straight, and coarse, but they have no beards. Their persons are of a full size, extremely straight, and well proportioned; and they are remarkably active.

Q. What is their character?

A. They are grave, even to sadness; their behaviour to those about them is regular, modest, and respectful; they never speak but when they have something important to communicate; and all their actions, words, and looks, are attended with some meaning.

Q. What is their prevailing passion?

A. The love of liberty. They are, however, very far from despising all kinds of authority; they are attentive to the voice of wisdom, which experience has conferred on the aged; and they enlist under the banners of the chief in whose valour they can confide, and serve him with fidelity.

Q. Do their chiefs possess much power?

A. No; the power of an Indian chief is rather persuasive than coercive; he has neither guards, prisons, or officers of justice; in short, he is reverenced as a father, rather than feared as a monarch.

Q. How are the interests of the community managed?

A. When any affair of consequence is to be settled, the heads of families meet together in a building appointed for the purpose, where their orators, in a bold and figurative style, accompanied with violent gestures, express their sentiments, and come to a decision.

Q. Do they not celebrate these meetings by a feast?

A. Yes; they generally appoint a feast on such occasions, of which nearly the whole tribe partakes. They accompany the feast with songs, music, and dancing; in the former, they recount the exploits of their ancestors; and their dances and music are rendered as martial as possible.

Q. How are the different tribes disposed to each other?

A. They are very frequently at war with each other, and they fight with the most savage fury.

Q. What are their usual motives for going to war?

A. Their most common motive for going to war is to revenge themselves for the loss of some friend whom their neighbours may have killed or taken prisoner; or else for the sake of acquiring prisoners to assist them in hunting, &c.

Q. Do they not use many horrid ceremonies previous to undertaking a war?

A. Yes; among which no one is more hideous than that of setting the war kettle on the fire; as it plainly indicates, that they were formerly accustomed to devour their enemies, though that horrid practice is now generally abolished.

Q. What other emblem of this custom do they adopt?

A. They send a large shell to their allies, inviting them to come along with them, and drink the blood of their enemies. In short, their resentments, as well as their friendships, are carried to the extreme.

Q. Do not the Indian warriors endeavour to render their appearance as terrible as possible?

A. Yes: they blacken their faces with charcoal, intermixed with streaks of vermillion, which give them a most horrid appearance. They then issue forth in search of their enemies, accompanied by their women to a considerable distance, to whom they give their ornaments as a token of their eternal friendship.

Q. What qualities are most essential to an Indian warrior?

A. Vigilance and attention to give and to avoid surprise; and in these qualities they are superior to every other nation in the world.

Q. Are not their instinctive faculties extremely acute?

A. Yes; their being accustomed to seek their food by hunting wild animals in the forests, renders their external senses extremely keen.

Q. What is related of them in this particular?

A. It is affirmed that they can discover their enemies at an immense distance, by the smoke of their fires, which they smell, and by the tracks of their footsteps, which they can plainly discern and count, although they might be imperceptible to an European eye.

Q. But as their enemies are equally skilful, what precautions do they take to avoid being discovered themselves?

A. They light no fire to warm themselves or to dress their victuals; they lie close to the ground all day, and travel in the night, and march only in files, so that the one who is in the rear may cover the tracks of the feet of those who have gone before, as well as his own, by strewing leaves over them.

Q, How do their enemies act if they are apprized of their approach?

A. If their enemies are apprized of the approach of a hostile force they throw themselves flat on the ground, among the withered herbs and leaves, and allow some to pass unmolested; when rising up from their ambush, with a tremendous shout, they pour a storm of musket-balls on their foes. As their rage increases, they rush on each other with clubs and hatchets, and a scene of dreadful carnage is soon displayed.

Q. What dreadful fate awaits those who may be made prisoners?

A. To describe all the horrid tortures which these savages inflict on their unhappy captives, is

a task too shocking for recital; suffice it too say, that every instrument of vengeance is called to their aid, and their brutal ferocity is never softened till nature sinks under the accumulated weight of its sufferings.

Q. How do the unhappy sufferers bear these tortures?

A. They bear them with a degree of fortitude that excels any thing an European can imagine. During the whole time of their execution, they display the most wonderful firmness and constancy: not a groan or sigh escapes them; they recount their own exploits, and threaten their executioners with the revenge that their countrymen will take for their deaths. Such is the wonderful power of early impressions, and a ferocious thirst for glory.

Q. To what part of America is the foregoing account of the natives particularly applicable?

A. The description just given particularly applies to the natives of North America; for the manners and general characteristics of great part of the orginal inhabitants of South America are very different.

Q. In what does this difference consist?

A. The inhabitants of South America are generally more feeble in their frame than those of North America; less vigorous in the efforts of their minds; possessing a gentle, rather than a warlike spirit; naturally indolent, and fond of pleasure.

Q. Were not the first discoverers of America astonished at the constitutional temperance of the natives?

A. Yes; when the Spaniards first visited America, they observed that the abstinence of the natives far exceeded any thing they could have conceived;

while, to the Americans, the appetites of the Spaniards appeared altogether as voracious; and they affirmed that a Spaniard would devour in one day as much food as would be sufficient for ten Americans.

Q. What is the nature of their religion?

A. The native Americans are all greatly addicted to superstition, and they worship a variety of different objects; they believe in a number of genii, or good and evil spirits; and that all their miseries proceed from the influence of their evil spirits, while their pleasures are derived from their good genii.

## CHAP. XX.

### *The Natural History and Productions of America.*

Q. WHAT general remark have you to offer respecting the animals of America?

A. All the quadrupeds of America are less than those which inhabit either Europe, Asia, or Africa; and even such as are imported into America, are often found to degenerate, but never improve there.

Q. Give some examples of that curious fact.

A. The Asiatic elephant, for instance, often grows to the height of fifteen feet, while the elephant of America, called the tapurette, is not larger than a calf of a year old. The tiger of Bengal, also, is six feet long, without including the tail; while the congar, or American tiger, seldom exceeds three feet: and the lama *, which

* For an account of the lama, see p. 36.

has been called the camel of Peru, bears no proportion to the Arabian camel.

Q. Are not the animals of America more prolific than those of the other quarters of the globe?

A. Yes; the wisdom of Providence is conspicuous in that respect; for it is a rule in nature, that the smallest animals multiply in the greatest proportion. The European goat, on being exported to South America, becomes much less in a few generations; but then, instead of producing one kid at a time, it produces four or five.

Q. Is the climate of America favourable for the productions of the vegetable kingdom?

A. Yes, eminently so; pine-apples, pomegranates, citrons, lemons, oranges, cherries, apples, pears, figs, grapes, and a great number of useful herbs and plants, grow wild in America to the greatest perfection.

Q. What valuable productions do we derive from thence?

A. Gold, diamonds, pearls, emeralds, and other precious stones; cochineal, indigo, anatto, logwood, brasil, fustic, lignum vitæ, rice, ginger, cocoa, sugar, cotton, tobacco, Peruvian bark, sassafras, tamarinds, many valuable balsams, and a great variety of woods, roots, and plants, to which, but for the discovery of America, we should be strangers.

END OF PART I.

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